

What is claimed is:

1. A flexible elongated exercise device for use in the exercise of the human body, having variable resistance to bending in any direction including:

an elongated flexible plastic tube having opposite ends

a rod fitting loosely within and substantially coextensive with said tube, said rod having a rectangular cross section shape and

a closure on each of said ends of said tube.

2. The exercise device of claim 1 wherein said rod is made of one of a group of mixtures including a mixture of thermoplastic resin and longitudinally oriented continuous fibers and a mixture of thermoset resin and longitudinally oriented continuous fibers.

3. The exercise device of claim 2 wherein said longitudinally oriented continuous fibers are selected from the group consisting of type E glass fibers, type A glass fibers, type S-2 glass fibers, Owens Corning 'Advantex' glass fibers, type AR glass fibers, carbon fibers, aramid fibers and polyester fibers.

4. The exercise device of claim 1 wherein the exterior shape of the flexible elongated exercise device is essentially cylindrical.

5. The exercise device of claim 1 in which the length of the flexible elongated exercise device is between 18 inches and 72 inches.

6. The exercise device of claim 1 wherein said flexible tube has an outside diameter between ½ inch and 3 inches.

7. The exercise device of claim 1 in wherein said rod has a percent volume fraction of fiber between 25% and 70%.

8. The exercise device of claim 1 wherein said closure is an end cap.

9. The exercise device of claim 1 wherein said rectangular cross section shape has rounded edges.

10. The exercise device of claim 1 having a soft sleeve covering said tube.

11. The exercise device of claim 1 and further comprising at least one additional rod fitting loosely in said tube, each additional rod being made of one of a group of mixtures including a mixture of thermoplastic resin and longitudinally oriented continuous fibers, a mixture of thermoset resin and longitudinally oriented continuous fibers, a thermoplastic resin containing no fibers and a thermoplastic resin with chopped fibers.

12. The exercise device of claim 1 having at least one additional rod fitting loosely within and substantially coextensive with said tube, said additional rod having a rectangular cross section shape.

13. The exercise device of claim 12 having a thin strip thermoplastic interleaved between said rods.

14. The exercise device of claim 1 wherein said flexible tube, when deformed by application of a force to each of its ends, will apply a pressure to the edges of said rod to assist in orienting it within said tube so that it will bend around its major axis.

15. The exercise device of claim 1 wherein said rod is formed by a pultrusion process.

16. The exercise device of claim 1 having a lubricant in the interior of said tube.